

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A presensitized plate ~~composed~~ comprised of a support having thereon an image recording layer which includes:

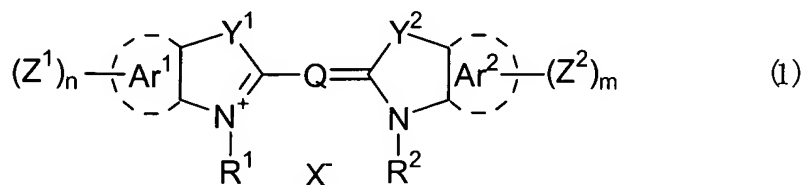
an infrared absorber (A) that is a cyanine dye having at least one fused ring ~~composed~~ comprised of a nitrogen-containing heterocycle in combination with an aromatic ring or a second heterocycle, and having on the aromatic ring or second heterocycle an electron-withdrawing group or a heavy atom-containing group,

a radical generator (B), and

a radical-polymerizable compound (C),

and which is removable with printing ink and/or dampening water.

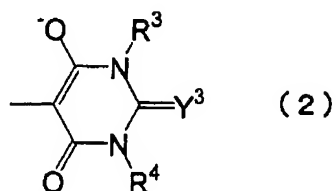
2. (Currently Amended) The presensitized plate according to claim 1, wherein the infrared absorber (A) is a compound of formula (1) below $[[.]]$:



~~in~~ wherein in the formula (1), R^1 and R^2 are each

independently a hydrocarbon group of up to 20 carbons which may be substituted $[[.]]_n$, Ar^1 and Ar^2 are each independently an aromatic hydrocarbon group or a heterocyclic group which may be substituted $[[.]]_n$, Y^1 and Y^2 are each independently a sulfur atom, an oxygen atom, a selenium atom, a dialkylmethylene group of up to 12 carbons or a $-CH=CH-$ group $[[.]]_n$, Z^1 and Z^2 are each substituents selected from the group consisting of hydrocarbon groups, oxy groups, electron-withdrawing groups and heavy atom-containing groups, at least one of Z^1 and Z^2 being an electron-withdrawing group or a heavy atom-containing group. ~~The~~ $[[.]]_n$ wherein the letters n and m each represent 0 or a higher integer, with the proviso that the sum of n and m is at least 1 $[[.]]_n$

Q is a pentamethine group or a heptamethine group which may be substituted with a member selected from the group consisting of alkoxy, aryloxy, alkylthio, arylthio, dialkylamino, diarylamino, halogen atoms, alkyl, aralkyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, oxy, iminium bases and substituents of formula (2) below; or may have a cyclohexene, cyclopentene or cyclobutene ring containing three connected methine chains $[[.]]_n$



~~In~~ wherein in the formula (2), R^3 and R^4 are each independently

a hydrogen atom, an alkyl of 1 to 8 carbons or an aryl of 6 to 10 carbons; and Y^3 is an oxygen atom or a sulfur atom $[[.]]$, and

X^- is a counteranion that exists in cases where charge neutralization is required. $[[]]$

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 1, wherein the support has thereon, in order, an undercoat layer containing a compound having a polymerizable group on the molecule, and the image recording layer.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~The presensitized plate according to claim 3,~~ A presensitized plate comprised of a support having thereon an image recording layer which includes:

an infrared absorber (A) having an oxidation potential of at most 0.45 V (vs. SCE),

a radical generator (B), and

a radical-polymerizable compound (C),

and which is removable with printing ink and/or dampening water, wherein the support has thereon, in order, an undercoat layer containing a compound having a polymerizable group on the molecule, and the image recording layer.

6. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 4, wherein the compound having a polymerizable group on the

molecule also has on the molecule an ethylene oxide group.

7. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 5, wherein the compound having a polymerizable group on the molecule also has on the molecule an ethylene oxide group.

8. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 4, wherein the compound having a polymerizable group on the molecule also has on the molecule a support-adsorbable group.

9. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 5, wherein the compound having a polymerizable group on the molecule also has on the molecule a support-adsorbable group.

10. (Original) The presensitized plate according to claim 1, wherein at least some of the infrared absorber (A), radical generator (B) and radical-polymerizable compound (C) is microencapsulated.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~The presensitized plate according to claim 3,~~ A presensitized plate comprised of a support having thereon an image recording layer which includes:

an infrared absorber (A) having an oxidation potential of at most 0.45 V (vs. SCE),

a radical generator (B), and

a radical-polymerizable compound (C),

and which is removable with printing ink and/or dampening water, wherein at least some of the infrared absorber (A), radical generator (B) and radical-polymerizable compound (C) is microencapsulated.

12. (Original) A lithographic printing method which includes the steps of imagewise exposing with an infrared laser the presensitized plate according to claim 1 which has the image recording layer that is infrared imageable, supplying an aqueous component and an oil-based ink to the exposed plate so as to remove unexposed areas of the image recording layer, and printing.

13. (Currently Amended) A lithographic printing method which includes the steps of imagewise exposing with an infrared laser ~~the~~ a presensitized plate ~~according to claim 3~~ which has ~~the~~ an image recording layer that is infrared imageable, supplying an aqueous component and an oil-based ink to the exposed plate so as to remove unexposed areas of the image recording layer, and printing ~~[[.]]~~,

wherein the presensitized plate is comprised of a support having thereon an image recording layer which includes:

an infrared absorber (A) having an oxidation potential of at most 0.45 V (vs. SCE),

a radical generator (B), and

a radical-polymerizable compound (C),

and which is removable with printing ink and/or dampening water.

14. (Original) The lithographic printing method according to claim 12, wherein the presensitized plate is mounted on a printing press prior to the imagewise exposure with an infrared laser.

15. (Original) The lithographic printing method according to claim 13, wherein the presensitized plate is mounted on a printing press prior to the imagewise exposure with an infrared laser.

16. (Original) The lithographic printing method according to claim 12, wherein the presensitized plate is mounted on a printing press following imagewise exposure with an infrared laser and before the supply of aqueous components and oil-based ink.

17. (Original) The lithographic printing method according to claim 13, wherein the presensitized plate is mounted on a printing press following imagewise exposure with an infrared laser and before the supply of aqueous components and oil-based ink.